DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 299 991 IR 052 440

TITLE IFLA General Conference, 1987. Division on Bibliographic Control. Bibliography and Round Table on A/V Media Section. Papers.

INSTITUTION International Federation of Library Associations, The Hague (Netherlands).

PUB DATE Aug 87

NOTE 17p.; Papers presented at the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) General Conference (53rd, Brighton, England, August 16-21, 1987).

PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Archives; *Audiodisks; Audiotape Recordings; *Cataloging; Developed Nations; Developing Nations; *Discographies; Foreign Countries; History; *Music; *National Libraries; Optical Data Disks; Union Catalogs

IDENTIFIERS *British Library (England); *National Bibliographies; Retrospective Bibliographies; Standardization

ABSTRACT

The two papers in this section focus on the bibliographic control of sound recordings, primarily phonograph records. In the first, "The National Discography for the United Kingdom," Christopher Roads discusses the problem of lack of easily accessible and up-to-date information about the growing collection of new sound recordings as they are being issued. Also discussed is the merger of the National Sound Archive (NSA) in 1985 with the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS) to found National Discography, Ltd., with the following company aims: (1) the compilation of a database of information on popular and classical music and jazz and blues recordings before they are released in a variety of different carriers to the public; (2) the publication of a current, comprehensive list of new records for use by trade and the public; (3) consideration of future publications in other specialist subject areas; and (4) improvement of public inquiry service via online or telephone link. In the second paper, "Bibliographic Control of Sound Recordings: An International View," Guy A. Marco describes the world situation in discography by identifying and discussing the contents of available contemporary discographies; briefly outlining the coverage of new recordings in national bibliographies; and analyzing two major projects in bibliographic control that are currently in progress. Appended are four sources for national bibliographies. (12 end notes) (CGD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED299991

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, BRIGHTON

Division: BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL

Section: BIBLIOGRAPHY & ROUND TABLE ON A/V MEDIA

214-BIBL-9/

AVM-9-E

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

THE NATIONAL DISCOGRAPHY FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM

by

CHRISTOPHER ROADS

Director

National Sound Archive

BRITISH LIBRARY

KEYWORD(S):

Discography

IR062440

For internal use only:

To be brought to meeting no: 158

Remarks:

to be presented orally [X]

for distribution only [ ]

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

A.L. Van Wesemael

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

NATIONAL DISCOGRAPHY

For some years before the British Library absorbed the British Institute of Recorded Sound it had been a major preoccupation of the Institute to provide adequate means of access to its growing collection of records. However, it found the task too difficult and, when the Institute joined the Library as the National Sound Archive in April 1983, this remained perhaps the most pressing of all problems facing management.

It was an awareness of the urgency and importance of the matter which led to major progress being made swiftly towards its solution. The lack of easily accessible and up-to-date information about recordings is not confined to the NSA with its internal cataloguing shortfall, but is widespread among the recording industry and national organisations involved with recordings, both in this country and many others overseas.

There is no publication in the UK which gives information on all recordings which are on sale. Those that are well established, such as the 'Gramophone' classical catalogue, concentrate on special subject areas and the limitations of their layouts do not allow many access points to the information they hold. There is no microfiche catalogue, nor any on-line service. Where sizable catalogues exist in private or public organisations, such as the BBC, they are an aid to their own staff and not available for general use.

Some countries have already started databases on sound recordings in their national libraries, as with the Phonothèque Nationale in Paris, but there is not yet a sufficient network for an easy exchange of information between countries to be made effectively. The recent difficulties experienced by the International Federation of Phonogram and Videogram Producers (IFPI) in trying to establish an international standard for record catalogue

numbers is symptomatic of the problems in this area.

To all these questions the NSA has addressed itself in drawing up plans for a National Discography. As the ambitious nature of the proposals was clear from the beginning, all major organisations that deal with sound recordings in the UK were invited to a series of meetings, in which the most effective course of action to benefit all parties was discussed. The result was an agreement between the NSA and the Mechanical-Copyright Protection Society (MCPS) to join forces in founding National Discography Ltd, a wholly-owned subisidiary of MCPS which will undertake the bulk of the necessary work. It is hoped that the database the company produces will be central to the functioning of the industry as a whole and to this extent two of the other organisations, the Performing Right Society (PRS) and Gallup who compile the national record charts, have confirmed their desire to be linked closely with it.

The benefits of this arrangement are numerous. Firstly, the NSA is able to share the direct costs of setting up and administering the project with another organisation. Secondly, MCPS is able to provide invaluable back-up support in the form of its own sophisticated computer operations, its large authority files on composers and musical works, and its experienced staff. Thirdly, the very nature of MCPS' work in copyright protection gives access to much important information. We believe this association between a copyright organisation and a national archive represents a partnership of strength for such an operation, bound by a wide range of mutual benefits.

After the contract had been signed at the end of 1985 work immediately began on the development of software for the input of information. A relational database is being used, allowing incorporation of MCPS's existing authority files, and special attention has been paid to the needs of working an on-line system alongside the requirements for print publications. By the autumn of 1986 the system was sufficiently advanced for staff to be hired and trained according to the agreed input regulations. At present four discographers are employed on input of information regarding popular music recordings with one further person specialising in classical music and another in jazz and blues. Once the procedures are fully underway a test on progress can be made to see if further staff will be required to keep up with output of new UK recordings and major imports from overseas.

From the start of 1987 it is expected that all items falling into this category will entered on to the database as they are released. Coverage should be complete with regard to all recordings on sale to the public within four years of the start of the agreement (i.e.1990). If staff time allows, an effort will also be made to include recordings retrospectively and several record companies have already expressed their willingness to provide access to their own computerised files of historical information. The National Discography will, of course, only contain commercially available recordings.

In trying to fulfil this aim of completeness one of the major obstacles is the sheer size of the task. Current estimates suggest that the British record industry issues about 20,000 new recordings each year, though an exact figure is difficult to determine. Each of these recordings may also be available on a variety of different carriers - LP, cassette, compact disc, special

formats and so on - with the result that National Discography may well find itself dealing with up to 60,000 different unique carriers each year.

It is here that the liaison with MCPS will be at its most helpful. In its position as the recognised society responsible for mechanical copyright payments MCPS has a legal right to statutory notices and other advance information giving details about the provenance and content of all recordings which are to be made commercially available in the UK. The department of staff employed on this work effectively monitors new recordings from within the industry in a way that the NSA could not manage by itself.

The success of data collection is crucial to the whole operation. By providing details on recordings before they are released to the public National Discography will make possible an immediate publication listing new records for trade and public use. Under the terms of the contract with MCPS, the NSA holds the rights to publication in print and other hard copy formats. In this respect it should be possible to provide a counterpart to the British National Bibliography, which is the major reference publication provided by the British Library in the comparable field of books.

It is hoped that the main publication will take the form of a comprehensive listing of all recordings that are on sale, probably a microfiche publication, in which form it will be possible to provide full cross references on the complete range of recordings without the restrictions of space set by concentional print formats. Flexibility of production will also allow updating each month.

For the future a wide range of other publications can be envisaged. Specialist subject areas, such as jazz and blues, reggae or dance bands, may generate their own catalogues. Lists can be produced giving the output of individual record companies; or, when a sufficient bulk of information has been amassed, it will be possible to produce catalogues of the complete output of any single composer, author or performer.

The exploitation of on-line access remains the province of MCPS, but staff and public will have access to the system direct at the NSA by means of a telephone link to the MCPS offices. Flexibility of access should allow improvement of the public enquiry service.

With the first few months of input now successfully completed the hopes are for a major improvement in the information regarding sound recordings not only within the NSA, but for all users in the UK and even, ultimately, on an international scale.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL OF SOUND RECORDINGS: AN INTERNATIONAL VIEW

Although the production of sound recordings, in the form of discs and cylinders, began more than 100 years ago, attempts to list new recordings have not yet begun to keep pace with output. In relatively few countries, and for recent years only, sound recordings have been included in national bibliographies. A more common type of list is the current catalog, issued by a commercial firm, containing the names of recordings "in print"--available for sale at the time that the catalog is published. National libraries and other research libraries may include sound recordings in their acquisition lists. The world situation in discography is one of immense variety; a bibliographer would see it as immensely chaotic.

If we consider the parallel situation, bibliographic control of book production, we see a long history of national efforts that aim for comprehensive listings of new publications. But sound recordings have been neglected, and the result is that individual scholars have taken up the task of retrospective discography, working on the output of certain companies, or certain performing artists, or in other limited areas. On the positive side, there are some recent large scale cooperative ventures in which substantial segments of retrospective discography are being brought under control.

In this brief presentation, I can only identify a few names, titles, projects, and trends. But I have prepared an appendix to the paper with some details on bibliographic control sources for sound recordings in various countries.

The earliest medium for the recording of sound was the cylinder, invented by Thomas Edison in 1877, and by 1888 several American firms were marketing cylinders containing music or spoken presentations. Although millions of cylinders were sold, public interest was gradually transferred to the disc: the gramophone record or phonograph record. Significant commercial production of cylinders ceased in 1929. Bibliographic control of cylinders issued during their four prominent decades has been attempted only in retrospect, since there was no systematic listing of new cylinders as they were being issued. The research of such specialists as Duane Deakins [1], Ron Dethlefsen [2], and Sydney Carter [3] has given us reasonably complete inventories of Edison's output, and lists of a few other firms, but the cylinders produced by many other companies in the United States and elsewhere have not been fully listed.

The sound quality of cylinders improved constantly, culminating in the remarkable Edison "Blue Amberol" of 1912, but the competing disc format gradually conquered the market. Acoustical improvements in playback equipment, as well as in the discs themselves, were continuous. Hundreds of manufacturers, all over the world, were producing records in the 1920's and 1930's. And there was little concern about bibliographic control of that output. Major producers did keep their own catalogs of what they recorded and issued, and modern scholars have turned to those documents as primary sources. Published contemporary discographies did not exist, except for sales lists of newly released records, until 1936. In that year the Gramophone Shop,

in New York, offered the first edition of The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music [4]. That pioneer work contained "all listings of serious music currently to be found in the catalogues of the world's record manufacturers." In other words, it was a list of discs in print. Sixty-six "labels"--the trade names used by manufacturers for series of records--were included, from Europe (including the Soviet Union) and America. A more ambitious project, which endeavored to include older records as well as those currently in print, was The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music, published in London, 1952, with three supplements [5]. The base volume listed about 40,000 items on more than 300 labels, from 1925 to 1951. Both of these early discographies restricted their content to so-called classical music, omitting large categories of production. However, the emphasis among most early record producers was in the "entertainment" area--comic monologs, popular songs of the day, marches, etc. Two types of non-classical music dominated the American industry during the period 1914-1948:jazz, and dance music. During those years dance music (instrumental) merged with popular song in the genre of the "Big Band." Thus any discography that omitted the jazz/popular records was telling only a small part of the story.

Fortunately there has been important research in retrospective jazz discography. Multi-volume works by such specialists as Walter Bruyninckx [6] and Brian Rust [7] have given us basic coverage. Dance music, especially before the emergence of the Big Band, is less well researched; Brian Rust's brave attempt to list the recordings of dance bands

in America having only brushed the surface [8].

A reminder may be useful at this point. The year 1949 marked the effective end of production for the disc known as the "78": the record that revolved 78 times per minute. With the introduction in that year of the 33 1/3 revolutions-per-minute "microgroove" record, by Columbia, a new age began which has only recently drawn to a close. This LP (long-playing) record allowed about 20 minutes of playing time on each side, compared with about five minutes on the old 78 record; it also offered higher fidelity, and economies of manufacture, and an unbreakable material. The result of its arrival--fortuitously in a period of economic revival in most countries--was a universal explosion of interest in phonograph records, an interest that had been suffering through the 1930's and early 1940's at the hands of the radio. And this new interest was notably directed toward classical music, leading to re-discoveries of such neglected repertoires as those of the Baroque period.

As an indicator of the amazing growth in the record industry after the introduction of the LP disc we may see what happened to the first commercial in-print list. In October 1949 a new periodical appeared: The Long Playing Record Catalog; publisher was a small record dealer in Cambridge, Massachusetts, named William Schwann. This catalog was simply a single listing of the individual catalogs issued by the eleven American firms who were making LP records; it included 674 discs. Twenty-five years later this list, revised monthly and carrying the new title Schwann

Catalog, was carrying about 45,000 records from more than 800 firms on four continents.

Not long after the first Schwann list appeared, similar compilations were published in Britain (The Gramophone Classical Record Catalog, 1953-) and in Germany (Bielefelder Katalog, 1953-). None of these catalogs is cumulative; each issue presents a list of currently available discs. Therefore they give us only one aspect of bibliographical control: the immediate view of what is in print. No comprehensive retrospective discography of the LP record has been attempted.

If we look at the accomplishments of the great national and research libraries in bibliographical control of sound recordings we must be disappointed. Recordings were not included in the world's largest inventory of library holdings, The National Union Catalog, Pre-1956 Imprints [9], nor are they found in the printed catalogs of the British Library, Bibliothèque Nationale, etc. From the Library of Congress we do have current accession lists since 1953, published annually and cumulated every five years [10] Perhaps the most valuable list from a research library is the Dictionary Catalog of the Rodgers & Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound in the New York Public Library [11]. More than 75,000 recordings are listed.

Three other recording formats need to be mentioned. We have mentioned cylinders, 78 rpm discs, and LP discs. In the same year as the introduction of the LP, 1949, there appeared a competing innovation: the "45." This is a 7-inch disk, spinning at 45 revolutions per minute; produced originally by the Victor

Company. Although intended for classical music, the 45 has become a medium for popular songs. The huge repertoire of rock music and other current styles that appears in this format is not under bibliographic control. A second recording format of consequence is the magnetic tape, which has appeared in various shapes and sizes. Its history is approximately contemporary with that of cylinder and disc recording, but significant marketing of pre-recorded tapes did not begin until 1954, and did not seriously compete with discs until Philips introduced the cassette tape in 1963. The Schwann Catalog and the Gramophone catalogs have included listings for pre-recorded tapes, and many discographies include tapes (for example, the New York Public Library catalog already mentioned).

Certainly the great recording innovation of the past 40 years is the CD: the compact disc, or laser disc. Introduced by Sony/Philips in 1983, the CD is a six-inch disc carrying digitally encoded information that is read by a laser light beam. In just a few years, a substantial repertoire of classical and popular music has been issued. In the April 1987 Schwann Compact Disc Catalog there are 8,600 CD's on about 440 different labels. (Both Schwann and Gramophone are now publishing separate CD catalogs in addition to their LP catalogs.) The general attitude among recording specialists is that the CD is the only disc format to take seriously, and that the LP era is over. Unfortunately bibliographic control of CD's is no better than what we have had for LP's.

Many scholars are doing outstanding work in retrospective

discography. Fortunately, although their work is widely scattered through books and journals, we have excellent guidance to it in a three-volume work (two further volumes are planned) published by R.R. Bowker of New York: The Bibliography of Discographies [12]. This series lists more than 10,000 discographies published since 1925, covering classical music and all popular music categories. It may well be regarded as the parallel to Besterman's World Bibliography of Bibliographies for the field of sound recordings. Supplements are appearing in the ARSC Journal (official publication of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections).

Now we may look quickly at the coverage of new sound recordings in certain national bibliographies. (Further information is in the Appendix.) Lists of recordings are included in the current national bibliographies of these countries, beginning with the dates given: Bulgaria, 1972; Canada, 1970; Cuba, 1970; Denmark, 1969; Federal Republic of Germany, 1974; Hungary, 1946; Iceland, 1974; Jamaica, 1975; Japan, 1948; Kenya (selectively), 1980; New Zealand, 1966; Papua New Guinea, 1981; Romania, 1952; and Yugoslavia, 1945. According to recent authoritative sources (cited in the Appendix) no other country is currently listing sound recordings in its national bibliography.

Finally there are two major projects, one American the other British, that should be described. The American effort is known as the Rigler and Deutsch Index. It is a union list of 78 rpm records in collections of the Library of Congress, New York Public Library, Syracuse University, Stanford University, and

Yale University. Approximately 275,000 different records are represented on 946 reels of microfilm, with photographs of the record labels; and there is computer access to the content of the file by composer, title, performer, label name, record number, matrix number, and library. The microfilm set is available for purchase. Further stages in this project will cover LP records and 45 rpm discs.

In the British Library, National Sound Archive, another significant attempt at bibliographic control is in progress. The National Register for Collections of Recorded Sound is a directory of private and institutional collections in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. With the exception of public library lending collections, the Register will list and describe all record repositories; a computer database will be established, and various publications will follow.

Bibliographical control of sound recordings is in its infancy. We do not even use the expression "discographical control." No country has a retrospective inventory, and very few are listing their current output. Still, scholarship is growing; national and international associations are active; national music centers are in some cases taking the place of national bibliographies in listing new recordings; and large scale computerized projects are having an impact. We have seen great progress in achieving both UBC (Universal Bibliographic Control) and UAP (Universal Availability of Publications). Now let us look for--and work for--UDC and UASR.

****

NOTES

1 Duane D. Deakins. Comprehensive Cylinder Record Index. Stockton, California [varies]: Author, 1960-61.

2 Ronald Dethlefson. Edison Blue Amberol Recordings. Brooklyn, New York: Antique Phonograph Monthly, 1980- . 2 vols.; vol. 3 (index) in progress.

3 Sydney Horace Carter. Blue Amberol Cylinders: A Catalogue. Bournemouth, England: Talking Machine Review, 1978.

4 Gramophone Shop, Inc., New York. The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music. 3rd ed., Robert H. Reid, supervising ed. New York: Crown, 1948. (1st ed. 1936; compiled by R.D. Darrell. 2nd ed. 1942; George C. Leslie, supervising ed. Publisher varies.) Reprint--Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1970.

5 The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. Ed. Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1952. 1st supplement (April 1950-May/June 1951) bound in. 2nd supplement (1951-52), 1952. 3rd supplement (1952-55), 1957. Reprint--Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1970.

For the period before 1925, many discographies of individual companies or artists are available; e.g. Ted Fagan, Encyclopedia Discography of Victor Recordings (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1983), Voices of the Past (Lingfield, England: Oakwood, 1956-) [10 vols. to date, surveying the international output of the Gramophone Company], Paul W. Worth and Jim Cartwright, John McCormack--A Comprehensive Discography (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986). There are also important lists by genre; e.g., Robert Bauer, The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09 (2nd ed. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1947; 1st ed. 1937), and James L. Creighton, Discopaedia of the Violin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974). The greater part of such research into early recordings appears in a small number of specialist journals, among them Antique Phonograph Monthly, Association for Recorded Sound Collections Journal, Goldmine, New Amberola Graphic, Record Research, and Talking Machine Review International.

6 Walter Bruyninckx, Sixty Years of Recorded Jazz. Mechelen, Belgium: Author, 1980.

7 Brian Rust, Jazz Records, 1897-1942 5th ed., Chigwell, England: Storyville, 1982; 1st ed. 1970. 2 vols.

8 Brian Rust, American Dance Band Discography, 1917-1942. New Rochelle, New York: Arlington House, 1975. The tentative character of this work is demonstrated by the fact that corrections and supplements have been appearing in issues of Record Research for ten years.

9 National Union Catalog, pre-1956 Imprints. London: Mansell, 1968-80. 685 vols. Supplement, 1980-81, vols. 686-754. Consists of about 10,000,000 entries contributed by 700 libraries, in main entry sequence.

10 Music, Books on Music, and Sound Recordings. Jan/June 1973- . Washington: Library of Congress, 1973- . Semiannual; 2nd issue of the year is annual cumulation. Continues Music and Phonorecords, 1953-72. List of materials cataloged by the Library of Congress and seven other research libraries. Main entry arrangement, with subject and genre index. Five year cumulations, and a cumulation for 1978-80.

11 New York Public Library, Dictionary Catalog of the Rodgers & Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1981. 15 vols. Access is by composer, title, performer, and subject.

12 Bibliography of Discographies. New York: Bowker, 1977-[83]. Vols. 1-3. (In progress.) V.1, Classical Music, by Michael H. Gray and Gerald D. Gibson; v.2, Jazz, by Daniel Allen; v.3, Popular Music, by Michael Gray. To be in five volumes.

SOURCES FOR NATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Commonwealth National Bibliographies; An Annotated Directory. 2nd ed. Compiled by the IFLA International Office for UBC. London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1983.

National Bibliographical Indexes of the Socialist Countries. Part One: Annotated Bibliographical Index. Moscow: The V. I. Lenin State Library of the USSR, 1984. (Title also in Russian; text in Russian.)

Retrospective National Bibliographies: An International Directory. Ed. Marcelle Beaudiquez. München: K. G. Saur, 1986. IFLA Publications 35. (Title also in French; text in English, French, and German.)

Synoptic Tables Concerning the Current National Bibliographies. Compiled by Gerhard Pomassl and a working group of the Deutsche Bücherei. Berlin and Leipzig: Deutsche Bücherei, 1975.

GUY A. MARCO
117 N. 15th Street #2102
Philadelphia, PA 19102